

(WASHINGTON, D.C.) Congressman Tim Ryan (D-Niles) announced today that he and Michigan Congressman Dale Kildee (D-Flint) have introduced legislation, the Urban Development Act of 2006, to create a program to provide federal matching funds for the demolition of condemned and tax foreclosed residential housing in eligible urban areas.

To qualify for up to \$500,000 in funds, a city must have a population above 40,000 and have experienced a 10 percent decrease in population over the course of the last two reports issued by the U.S. Census Bureau. In addition to being used for demolitions, the funds could also be spent on remediation of the sites prior to demolition and, after the demolition is finished, rehabilitation of the sites into public-use spaces.

"If enacted, this legislation will provide needed funding for a city like Youngstown to address the problem of urban blight," said **Congressman Ryan**. "Areas that are now public hazards could become parks, gardens or trails, leaving neighborhoods that are safer and healthier."

"Congressman Ryan is taking significant steps to assist us in addressing the enormous and numerous problems that these blighted structures create in our neighborhoods," said **Jay Williams, Mayor of Youngstown**. "We look forward to advocating and working with him in any way that we can, to bring success to this measure."

Cities that become eligible for funding would also be encouraged to work with community leaders, resident and citizens' associations, law enforcement officials, and fire departments when deciding which residential housing should be demolished.

